Book 2

The Spiritual Season

Project Booklet

Under the Guidance of Moulana Nabi R. Mir (Abidi)

Please recite a Sūrah al-Fātiḥah for
the sponsors of this project booklet.

Important dates in Rajab

1st	Wilādah of Sayyidah Sakīnah (ʿa), daughter of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa)
1st	Wilādah of Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir (ʿa)
3rd	Shahādah of Imām ʿAlī an-Naqī (ʿa)
10th	Wilādah of Imām Muḥammad at-Taqī (ʿa)
13th	Wilādah of Imām ʿAlī (ʿa)
15th	Wafāt of Sayyidah Zaynab (ʿa), daughter of Imām ʿAlī (ʿa)
24th	Battle of Khaybar won by Imām ʿAlī (ʿa)
25th	Shahādah of Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (ʿa)
27th	Eid al-Mabʿath and Miʿrāj
28th	Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) leaves Medina; Journey to Karbala begins

Important dates in Shaʿbān

3rd	Wilādah of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa)
4th	Wilādah of Ḥaḍrat ʿAbbās (ʿa), son of Imām ʿAlī (ʿa)
5th	Wilādah of Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (ʿa)
13th	Wilādah of Ḥaḍrat ʿAlī al-Akbar (ʿa), son of Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa)
15th	Wilādah of Imām Muḥammad al-Mahdī (ʿaj)

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INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION:

al-Islam.org

Lunar Learners: Miraj craft
Islamic Bedtime Stories: Fasting is a Shield chart
Teaching Young Muslims: The Curtain of Ghaibat

cover: freepik

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ

Salāmun ʿalaykum,

May Allah (swt) bless us, our families, and our communities. My tabrīkāt, taḥiyyāt, best wishes, and congratulations to the Imām of our time, Imām al-Mahdī (ʿaj), our great marājiʿ and scholars, and to the Muslim ummah on the beginning of the spiritual season, the blessed months of Rajab, Shaʿbān, and Shahr Ramaḍān.

A plant does not suddenly appear out of nowhere. It begins as a seed and gradually grows in stages. But in order for a plant to be healthy, it must also receive adequate amounts of water, nutrients, and sunshine. In other words, it must be taken care of properly. One can analogize the soul in a similar manner. In Islam, the purpose of a human's existence is to reach perfection, which is defined as closeness (qurb) to Allah (swt). Just as the spring season marks the regrowth of the plans, the month of Rajab marks the renewal of a person's soul and quest for union with Allah (swt).

In this sense, Rajab is the month of reseeding our faith and relationship with Allah (swt). We nourish this seed with spiritual water and sun through various recommended ritual practices and by following the example and blueprint of Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ) and his Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa). This seed eventually grows into a plant during the month of Shaʿbān. In this month, we continue to grow the plant by nourishing the soul with proper akhlāq and observing our duties towards Allah (swt). These actions of renewal prepare us for the upcoming Shahr Ramaḍān. This holy month is critical in our quest to reach spiritual perfection and for our salvation in the Hereafter, so we wouldn't want to enter it empty handed. We want to enter it spiritually renewed so that we may take our relationship with Allah (swt) to the next level.

Let us therefore take advantage of this beautiful month of Rajab. Let us grow this seed of faith by following the example of the Noble Prophet (ṣ) and his Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) and serving the oppressed of the world through prayer and good deeds. By following the right role models and serving Allah's creatures all around the earth, we open the opportunity to finally reach communion with Him.

In honor of these blessed months, we are pleased to launch the annual Spiritual Season Project Booklet. This booklet includes six lesson plans that have been put together in collaboration with scholars and educators. We pray these projects will assist in planting the love of the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) in our children and serving the oppressed of the world through prayer and good deeds. By following the right role models and serving Allah's creatures all around the earth, inshāʾAllāh we will become closer to Him.

Our humble request is to create a two-way connection by all of us sharing our expertise and experiences and avoiding duplicated work, in order to maximize our potential. Please share your ideas, experiences, and successes with us, so that together, we can all move forward and build a global network.

We pray that Allah (swt) gives us the tawfīq to fulfill our duties and responsibilities towards our children, the future generation of ambassadors of Islam in this part of the world.

Jazākallāh khayrā and best wishes,
Nabi R. Mir (Abidi)
Resident ʿĀlim of SABA Islamic Center

The Season of Spirituality

Objective: Students will learn about the Season of Spirituality, and how Rajab, Shaʿbān, and Shahr Ramaḍān all have their separate roles in this season.

We know that the solar year is divided into four natural seasons: spring, summer, fall, and winter. Similar to this, in the Islamic year, there is a special season known as the Season of Spirituality. This is a special time of the year where we remember and pray to Allah (swt) more than usual. The three Islamic months that make up this season are Rajab, Shaʿbān, and Shahr Ramaḍān. During these months, Allah (swt) gives us a special opportunity to pray and become closer to Him. Each month of this season has a different role that helps us clean and beautify our souls. Let's take a closer look.

The month of Rajab is the month in which we clean our souls. We can do this by reciting "astaghfirullāh" and asking Allah (swt) for forgiveness. Once we have cleaned our souls, we can make our souls beautiful during the month of Shaʿbān by reciting ṣalawāt and sending blessings to the Prophet (ṣ) and his family. Finally, in Shahr Ramaḍān, we are ready to be the guests of Allah (swt). It is in this month that Shayṭān is locked up and Allah (swt) showers us with more blessings, since we are His guests! Alḥamdulillāh!

To help us become closer to Allah (swt) in this season, we will be making a Wheel of Spirituality to help us remember the role of each month and what we need to do in each of these months to earn Allah's mercy and kindness, inshāʾAllāh.

Spiritual Season Wheel

Suggested Ages: 5+

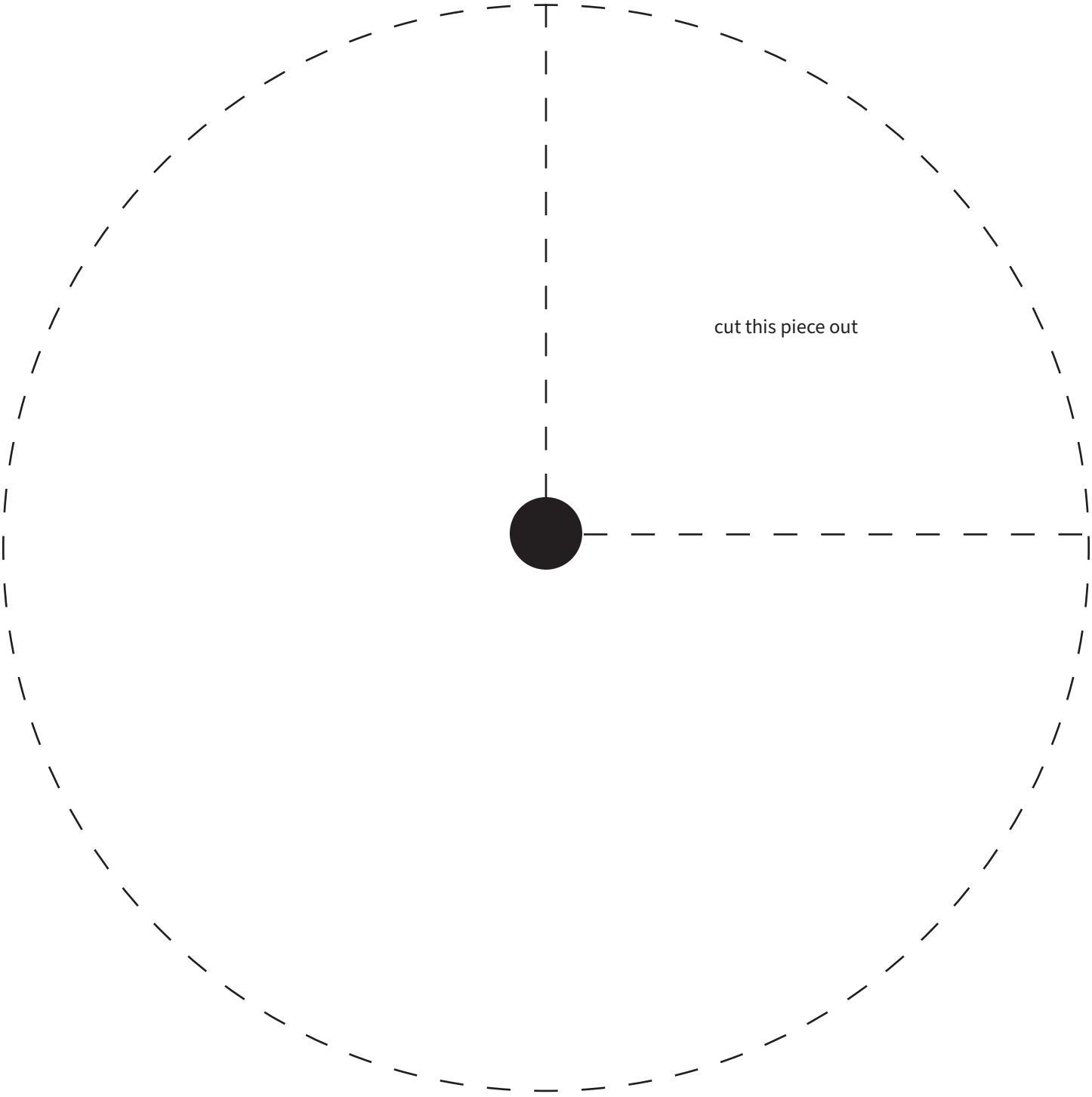
Time: 40 minutes

Materials:

- Wheel template
- Crayons/colored pencils
- Scissors
- Paper fastener

Procedure:

1. Color and decorate the circles however you like.
2. Cut out the 2 circles from the template.
3. Take the first circle and cut out the piece that says "cut this piece out" by cutting along the dotted lines.
4. Place the first circle over the second one with the 4 sections.
5. Make a small puncture at the center of the circles at the dot.
6. Poke the paper fastener through the hole and fasten it in the back. Now you can turn the wheel to see the different stages of this season.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I start the Spiritual season with
Bismillah
In Rajab, I cleanse my soul by saying
Astaghfirullah
In Shaban, I beautify my soul by reciting
Salawat
It is now Shahr Ramadan, and I am
ready to be a
guest of
Allah (swt)

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The Gate to Knowledge

Objective: Students will learn about what it means to follow the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) and how to apply their teachings in our lives.

The Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) have always emphasized the importance of gaining knowledge, as we have seen in various different ḥadīth. There are so many ways to gain knowledge. We learn from teachers, the lectures at the masjid, our ʿulamāʾ, books, and so much more. In honor of the wilādah of our first Imām, Imām ʿAlī (ʿa), let's take a look at one ḥadīth that describes his level of knowledge.

Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ) once said, "I am the city of knowledge and ʿAlī is the gate." Think about how we enter a city. If we want to enter a city, we have to go through the gate. So, if we want to get the knowledge of Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ), we have to go through Imām ʿAlī (ʿa). This means that Imām ʿAlī (ʿa) had so much knowledge and that we should learn from him.

There is a special book called Nahj al-Balāghah that has many of Imām ʿAlī's speeches, letters, and sayings. In one of his sayings, Imām ʿAlī (ʿa) tells us, "Knowledge is a great treasure that does not run out." How is knowledge a treasure? The kind of knowledge that helps us to know and become closer to Allah (swt) is a treasure for us. Since our Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) were so knowledgeable, they always remembered Allah (swt) and taught us how to get closer to Him. Today, we will be doing a special project to remind us how knowledge can guide us towards Allah, inshāʾAllāh!

Treasure of Knowledge

Suggested Ages: 5+

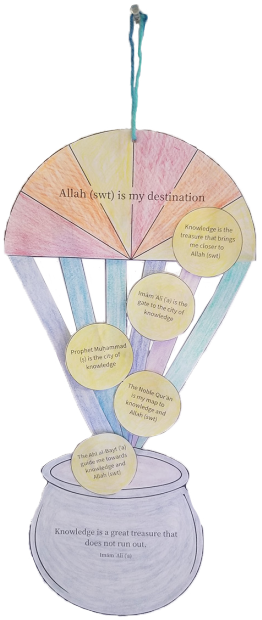
Time: 40 minutes

Materials:

- Coins and template
- Crayons/colored pencils
- Scissors
- Glue/tape
- Ribbon/yarn

Procedure:

1. Color the pictures in the template however you like.
2. Cut out all the pieces. Make sure you cut out all the strips separately.
3. Lay the arch about 7.5" above the pot.
4. Then, beginning from one end of the arch's bottom edge, glue the strips at angles so that the other end of each strip meets at the center of the pot's mouth.
5. Glue the ends of each strip to the back of the pot.
6. Next glue the coins onto the strips, starting at the pot and leading up toward the arch.
7. Finally, punch a hole at the top of the arch and tie a ribbon or yarn to hang it with.


Allah (swt) is my destination
Knowledge is the treasure that brings me closer to Allah (swt)
Imam Ali (a) is the gate to the city of knowledge
Prophet Muhammad (s) is the city of knowledge
The Noble Qur'an is my guide to knowledge and Allah (swt)
The Ahl al-Bayt (a) guide me towards knowledge and Allah (swt)
Knowledge is a great treasure that does not run out.
Imam Ali (a)

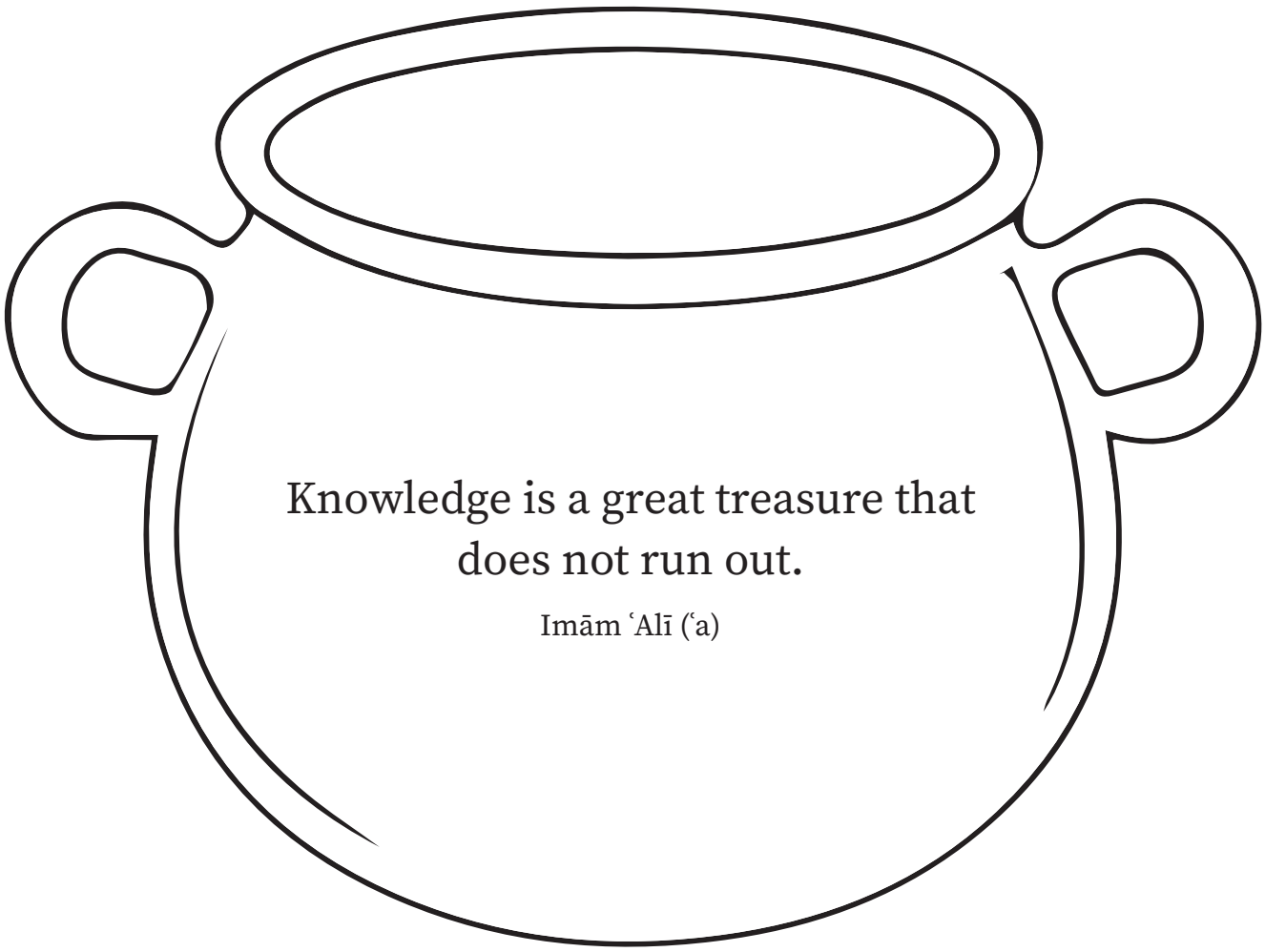
Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ) is the city of knowledge

Knowledge is the treasure that brings me closer to Allah (swt)

The Noble Qurʾān is my map to knowledge and Allah (swt)

Imām ʿAlī (ʿa) is the gate to the city of knowledge

The Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) guide me towards knowledge and Allah (swt)



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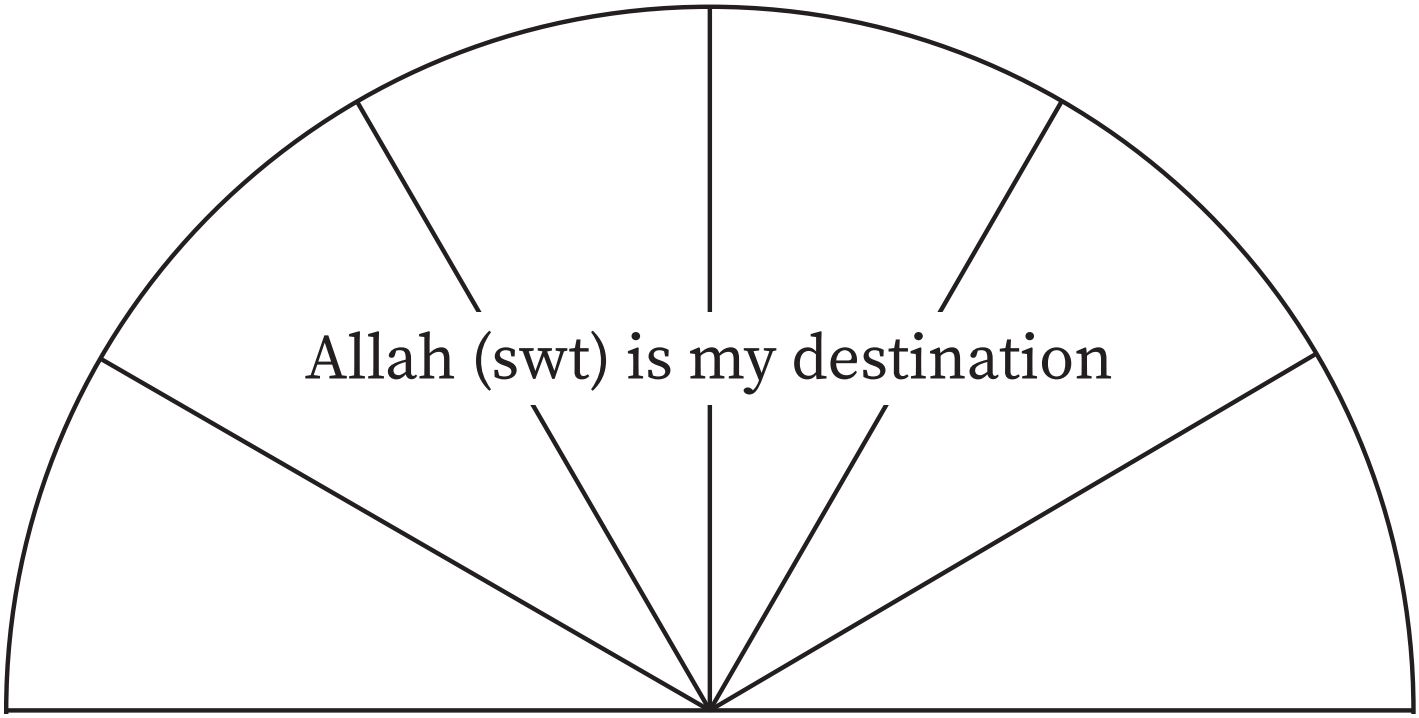
Allah (swt) is my destination

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Charity of Helping Others

Objective: Students will learn about a specific kind of charity, according to our 7th Imām (ʿa).

During these 2 months of the Spiritual Season, in the middle of celebrating many different wilādahs and happy occasions, we commemorate the shahādah of our 7th Imām, Imām Mūsā al-Kaẓim (ʿa) on the 25th of Rajab. He was well known for his patience throughout his life, and especially during times of difficulty.

There are many recommended acts to do during the Spiritual Season, such as fasting, reciting the Qurʾān, and doing istighfār. One such act that is also recommended to do is give charity. There are different kinds of charity that we can do besides giving money. Imām al-Kaẓim (ʿa) described one kind of charity when he said, "your assistance of the weak is one of the best forms of charity."[1] This can mean helping someone who may be physically weak, or even someone who is weak in knowledge. For example, when we help a fellow classmate with their homework, or teach someone to read the Qurʾān, we are practicing what Imām al-Kāẓim (ʿa) said.

Today, we are going to color a charity "jar" where we can track all the times we have given the charity of our help to someone during this Spiritual Season.

1 Tuḥaf al-ʿUqūl, P. 414

Acts of Charity Jar

Suggested Ages: 5+

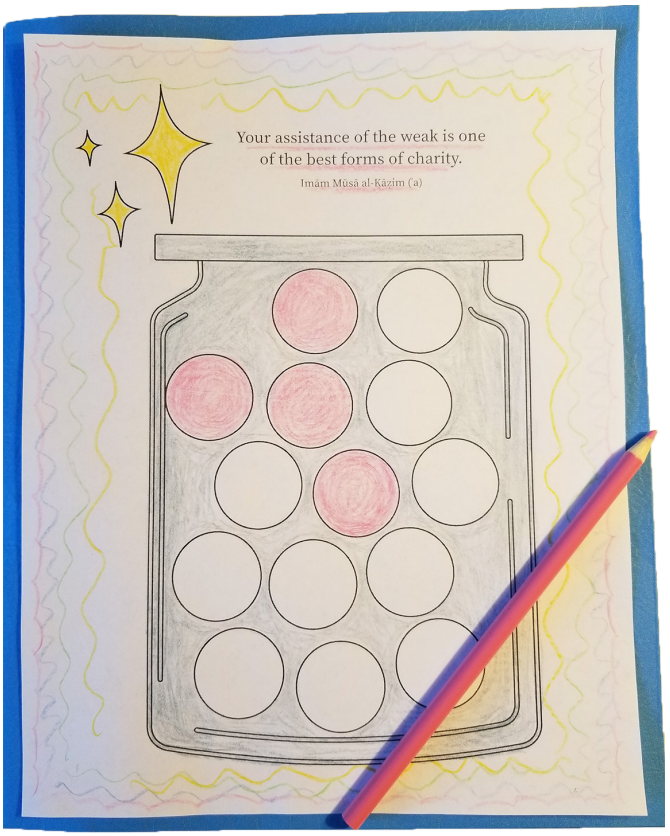
Time: 40 minutes

Materials:

- Charity jar chart
- Crayons/colored pencils/markers

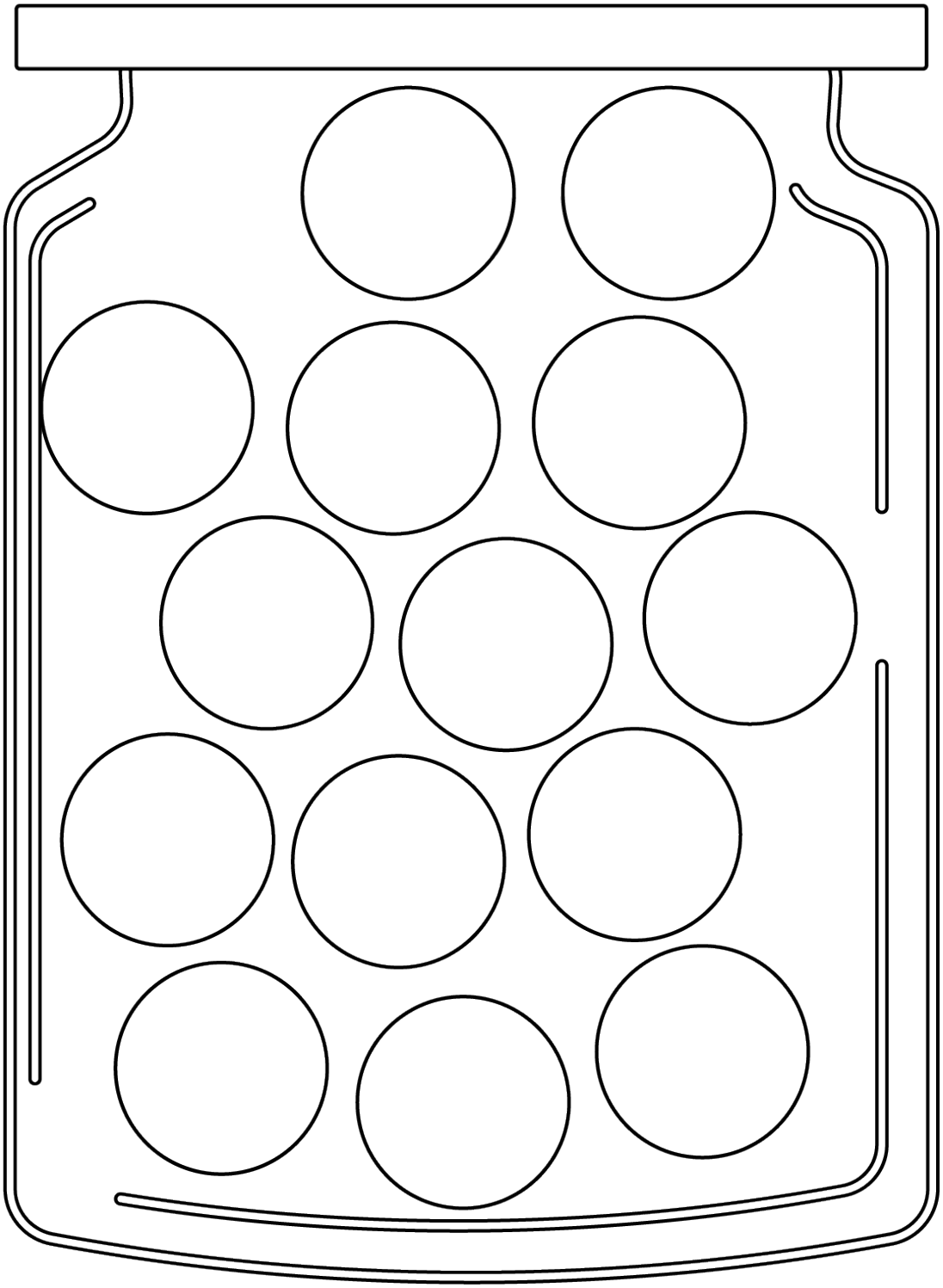
Procedure:

1. Color and decorate the chart however you like.
2. Try to do different acts of charity throughout the Spiritual Season. Each time you do, color in one of the coins in the jar.



Your assistance of the weak is one of the best forms of charity.

Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (ʿa)



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The Night of Miʿrāj

Objective: Students will learn about the Noble Prophet's journey on the night of Miʿrāj.

The 27th of Rajab is a special day because we celebrate two occasions on this day: Biʿthat and Miʿrāj. Biʿthat is when the Prophet (ṣ) was in the Cave of Ḥirāʾ and Angel Jibrāʾīl came down and taught him the first verse of the Qurʾān.

The event of Miʿrāj is when Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ) went up to the heavens and spoke with Allah (swt)! The Noble Prophet (ṣ) traveled on a special animal called Burāq. He traveled to Masjid al-Ḥarām, where the Kaʿbah is and then to Masjid al-Aqṣā, or "the farthest mosque." From Masjid al-Aqṣā, he went up to the heavens. Here, he saw the different levels of heaven and spoke to angels and previous Prophets.

Finally, the Prophet (ṣ) reached the highest place in heaven, where he got to speak with Allah (swt). One of the things Allah (swt) taught the Prophet (ṣ) during this visit was how to do wuḍūʾ and pray ṣalāh. Today, we are going to make a craft that will show this special journey of the Noble Prophet (ṣ).

Miʿrāj Journey Craft

Suggested Ages: 5+

Time: 40 minutes

Materials:

- Miʿrāj template
- Crayons/colored pencils
- Scissors

Procedure:

1. Color the pictures in the template however you like.
2. Cut out the shape from the template by cutting all along the dotted line.
3. Fold along the 4 solid lines of the square. This will make 4 flaps.
4. Now fold close each flap with the pictures inside.
5. When you get to the last flap, gently tuck it underneath the bottom most flap (the one you folded down first).
6. You can color and decorate the outside of the craft however you like.

The Night of Miʿrāj

The Heavens

Masjid al-Aqṣā

Masjid al-Ḥarām

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Prayers of Free People

Objective: Students will learn about the different kinds of worshippers.

It's the month of Shaʿbān and today we are celebrating the birthday of a very special person. It is Imām Ḥusayn's wilādah! He was born on the 3rd of Shaʿbān, one of the three months in the Spiritual Season. His father, Imām ʿAlī (ʿa) once said, "A group of people worshiped Allah out of desire for reward, surely this is the worship of traders. Another group worshipped Allah out of fear; this is the worship of slaves. Still another group worshiped Allah out of gratitude; this is the worship of free men."[1] The worship of the third group is the ideal kind.

We should make sure the intention of our worship is to get closer to Allah (swt). The best way to do this is to be grateful to Allah (swt) and thank Him for all of His blessings. Throughout his life, and especially on the day of Āshūrāʾ, Imām Ḥusayn (ʿa) always remembered Allah (swt) and was grateful for everything, despite the hardships and tragedies he faced. Today, we will make a pop-up card to help remind us of what kind of worshiper we should be, inshāʾAllāh!

1 Nahj al-Balāghah, Ḥadīth #237

Ḥadīth Pop-up Card

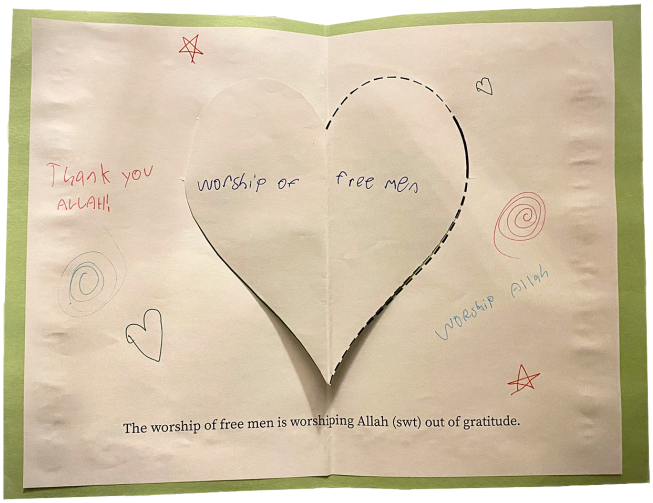
Suggested Ages: 5+

Time: 40 minutes

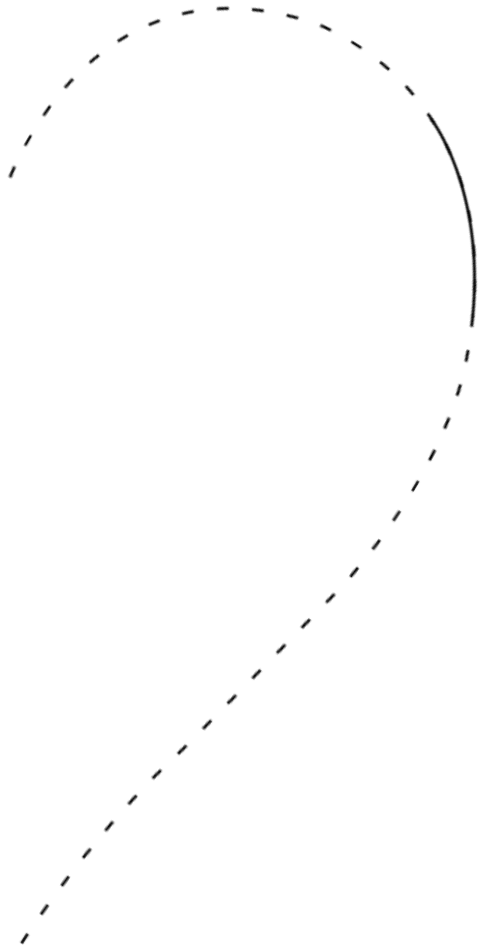
Materials:

- Pop-up card template
- Construction paper (any color)
- Crayons/colored pencils
- Scissors
- Glue

Procedure:



1. Fold the template page in half widthwise with the image of the half heart facing up.
2. Carefully cut along the dotted line of the half heart. **Do not cut** the solid portion of the line. This should leave the heart still attached to the paper, not detached.
3. Unfold the paper to reveal a full heart. Fold the heart inside the card by gently pushing it at the fold. This will create a pop-up effect when the card is opened and closed.
4. Then, glue construction paper on the back of the card. Be sure not to glue down the heart.
5. Now you can color and decorate the card however you like.



The worship of free men is worshiping Allah (swt) out of gratitude.

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Sun Behind the Clouds

Objective: Students will learn about ghaybah and how our Imām (ʿaj) guides us.

The 15th of Shaʿbān is a very special day in the Islamic year. It is the wilādah of the 12th Imām, Imām Muḥammad al-Mahdī (ʿaj). He is special because he is the Imām of our time, living today, and we want to make sure we are his followers. Imām al-Mahdī (ʿaj) is different from the other Imāms in that he is hidden, and we are not able to communicate with him directly. This is known as ghaybah. So if we cannot see him or meet him, how is he able to guide us?

Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq (ʿa) explained this when he talked about how the world would never be without a representative of Allah (swt) to guide the people, whether they are visible or not. Someone asked him how people could benefit and be guided by an invisible representative. The Imām (ʿa) replied, "just as they benefit from the sun when the clouds hide it!"[1] On a cloudy day, when the sun is hidden behind the clouds, we can still see its light and even feel its warmth. That is how our Imām (ʿaj) is for us.

We want to make sure that the "cloud" between us and the Imām (ʿaj) is not too thick that we cannot benefit from his presence. When we sin, our souls get more cloudy. This then decreases our connection with the Imām of our time (ʿaj). This is not the kind of relationship we want to have with the Imām (ʿaj). Therefore, we must try our best to make the Imām (ʿaj) happy by doing good deeds, serving the people, and remembering him all the time so we can benefit from his guidance. Today we are going to do an activity that will show us how a thicker "cloud" will reduce our connection with the Imām (ʿaj).

1 Biḥār al-Anwār, Vol. 52, Ch. 20, P. 92

Curtain Activity

Suggested Ages: 5+

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

- Flashlight
- Clear material (ex: plastic)
- Thin cloth (ex: a thin scarf)
- Thicker cloth (ex: towel)
- Very opaque material (ex: cardboard box)

Procedure:

1. Take the flashlight and shine it through the clear material. You can see the flashlight.
2. Then shine the light through the thin material. The flashlight is still pretty clear, but a little fuzzier.
3. Next, shine the light through the thicker cloth. You'll notice that the light still shines through, but the flashlight is not visible.
4. Now shine the light through the cardboard. Here, you can see that the light is very dim.

In the activity above, we saw how various materials (with different thickness) change the amount of light that passes through. Our souls are like these materials and the connection with the Imām (ʿaj) is like the flashlight.

1. Clear Material

2. Thin Material

3. Thicker Material

4. Opaque Material

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